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## Senate

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, You have always been our helper. Continue to teach our lawmakers to live for Your glory.

Lord, lead them along the paths that will keep our Nation strong. Give them confidence in Your guidance and a passion for Your truth. Strengthen them so that they will be courageous in defense of righteousness. Inspire them to wait patiently for the ultimate triumph of Your prevailing providence. May they find spiritual nourishment simply by being kind to each other.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

### NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, yesterday, the Senate completed an extremely productive day by confirming three members of President Biden's Cabinet. Today, we are going to keep up the pace by moving the ball forward on two more of the President's nominees.

First, the Senate will begin the process of bringing Xavier Becerra's nomination to the floor to serve as HHS Secretary. This is a critical position as we continue to battle the virus, and I am perplexed that none of my Republican colleagues would vote for him. He is a capable man, and he has worked hard to make sure that people get healthcare. Some have said: Well, he is not a doctor. Neither was the previous Trump nominee for HHS, who happened to be a pharmaceutical company executive. Whom would Americans prefer?

Second, the Senate will move forward with another very historic nominee who makes us so proud, Representative DEB HAALAND of New Mexico, to serve as the next Secretary of the Interior. She will be confirmed on Monday. Representative HAALAND was elected to the Congress in 2018. She was the first Native American woman, along with Representative SHARICE DAVIDS of Kansas, to ever serve in the people's House. If confirmed, Representative HAALAND will not only become the first Native American to lead the Department of the Interior, but she will be the first Native American to serve in any Cabinet position in American history. We have had a Vice President with Native American roots but never a Cabinet official.

Given the long and troubled relationship between the Federal Government and Tribal nations, the ascension of

Representative HAALAND to the top of the Interior Department is a profoundly important moment for America as we advance on the long road—still not fully traveled at all—toward equality. For too long, Tribal nations have been denied a seat at the table where decisions were made that impacted their lives and their land. Not only will Secretary HAALAND ensure that they get a seat, she will bring her own lived experiences to the table alongside them.

Under President Trump, the Department of the Interior became one of the most scandal-ridden Agencies in the history of the Federal Government. It gave oil and mining companies carte blanche to drill in wildlife reserves. It rolled back environmental protections and greatly undermined trust in the Federal Government and Tribal lands.

Representative HAALAND will move the Department in a dramatically different direction. One of her most important responsibilities will be to restore and uphold the Federal Government's obligations to sovereign Tribal nations. I cannot think of a better candidate to take on this job than Representative HAALAND, and I greatly look forward to confirming her. It will be historic.

Now, in general, Madam President, the Senate is making great progress in installing President Biden's highly qualified nominees. So far, we have already confirmed 16 Cabinet-level appointments. We are set to increase that number to 18 after Secretaries HAALAND and Becerra are approved. Every single one of the President's nominees has been confirmed with a bipartisan vote here on the Senate floor. President Biden deserves to have his team in place, and the Senate is moving quickly to get the job done.

### AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, Madam President, on the American Rescue Plan,

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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